

SAFETY UPDATE

**Fort Sam
Houston
Director of
Public Safety**

New Leadership Heads Quarterly Safety Council at FSH

The Fort Sam Houston (FSH) Safety Council convened on 20 September 2000. Present for the first time, at this Safety Council, was the new leadership of MG Kiley, Installation Commander (Chairman), and COL Biggerstaff, Garrison Commander (Co-Chairman).

The FSH Safety Council convenes on a quarterly basis to discuss the many safety issues affecting AMEDDC&S & FSH. Old business included on-line accident/incident/near miss reporting, status of the safety programs, construction site inspections, and open safety deficiencies. New business included

an Ergonomics Committee update, recent Bike Rodeo, and indoor air quality concerns. Recurring reports included accident statistics, safety training, Injury/Illness Management Committee update and a Camp Bullis update. Current issues are the trenching operations and uneven sidewalks along Stanley Road.



COL Biggerstaff, Garrison Commander, reading the Safety Update.

“Safety is everyone’s mission, all the time—and great organizations are great at everything they do! Safety has always been important to me, and I know it is important to Ft. Sam Houston!”, MG Kiley, Installation Commander

According to COL Biggerstaff, safety is a perishable commodity—if we don’t use it or keep it in mind we tend not to think about it until a serious accident or fatality occurs. Remember, people are our most important resource and with recent changes, e.g. downsizing, (continued next page ...)

Excavation and Trenching Across Sidewalks and Roads Present Hazards

Currently, and in the recent past, Fort Sam Houston, has both the pleasure and the burden of much excavation and trenching taking place. The pleasure is that new utilities – communication, water, etc. – are being installed. The burden is two fold. First, there is slight dis-



Backhoe digging a trench in field along Stanley Road.

ruption with the traffic flow while roadways and pedestrian walkways are being crossed. Second, the initial repairs often sink and cause an uneven surface.

The sinking is compounded under the recent drought conditions in San (Continued next page)

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Upcoming Training:

- *Collateral Duty Safety Officer Class—24/25 Oct*
- *MHE (Forklift) - 26 Oct*
- *Risk Management—7 Nov*
- *COR/Initiator of Service Contract Modular Course—8 Nov*
- *Trenching & Shoring—14 Nov*
- *HAZCOM—6 Dec*
- *Incidental Exposure to Blood borne Pathogens—14 Dec*

Classes are currently held at the Roadrunner, Building 2797. For dates and times check out our website at www.cs.amedd.army.mil/iso/ or call us at 221 - 9872.

**Guadalupe Gomez,
Safety and Occupational
Health Manager**

New Leadership Heads the Safety Council *(continued...)*

even *one* injury/illness will have a great impact on the FSH community. We must all stay alert to prevent avoidable accidents and injuries. Safety is everyone's business - if you see an unsafe act it is your responsibility to identify it or report it to the Safety Office.

Safety begins with the employees working safely, supervisor's enforcing safety requirements, managers making safety a number one priority and leadership

fostering a safe environment for everyone on post. Risk assessments should be done daily and in everything we do. Don't gamble with your safety or take unnecessary chances—remember if you flip a coin, you won't get heads every time.

COL Biggerstaff indicated that he would like to see zero "avoidable" accidents under his leadership.

For that to occur he expects his Commanders/Directors, managers, first-line supervisors to be responsible for safety in their workplace. He encourages open communication and exchange of ideas up and down the chain of command. To start he would like to see safety mentioned in performance reviews and will start discussing safety issues in the staff meetings.

Excavation and Trenching Across Sidewalks and Roads Present Hazards *(continued from page 1)*

Antonio. The fill is compacted to the correct compaction ratio when it is placed back into the trench; however, it continues to release moisture and loses volume because of the intense heat. Additionally, the entire geological substrate throughout Fort Sam Houston and other areas of the city and south Texas is shrinking because of lack of rain. The lack of rain, hence substrate movement, also causes our roads and sidewalks to move and become uneven.

The Public Works Business Center and the Directorate of Public Safety are working together with the various contractors to minimize disruption, ensure all excavations and trenchings are properly guarded, and that dips are corrected.

As we struggle through this combination of drought and utility expansion, we ask assistance and support from both drivers and pedestrians. The following are some tips:

Driving:

- If you see a dip up ahead, slow down in advance to give warning to the person driving behind you.
- If there is a dip that is extraordinarily deep or danger-

ous is some other manner (one portion dropped significantly below others) please notify the Traffic Section of the Directorate of Public Safety at 1-0212 or 1-0457.

Walking/Running: Sidewalks can be used for along any road for jogging, however some roads *are prohibited* to all runners. These roads are:

- ⇒ Stanley Road
- ⇒ Dickman Road
- ⇒ Artillery Post Road
- ⇒ Wilson Road
- ⇒ Scott Road
- ⇒ N. New Braunfels Road
- ⇒ Harry Wurzbach Road
- ⇒ Schofield Road

- If walking or running during hours of darkness carry a flashlight to shine on the sidewalk in front of you. Of course you should also be wearing light (or reflective) clothing, staying out of the roadway, and being alert to traffic.
- Leaders of troops must routinely reconnoiter (pre-inspect) their troop run routes and make adjustments as necessary.

- Keep your attention on the running surface.
- If someone is running behind you and you come across an uneven surface, raise your hand to warn the follower.
- If you come across an uneven surface, call the Safety Office at 295-SAFE (7233). A Safety Specialist will evaluate the surface and initiate action as appropriate.

The Safety Office personnel will be walking the primary sidewalks on Fort Sam Houston to identify problem areas. If you have additional suggestions, please call the Safety Office at 1-9872 or email Juana.Zamora@CEN.AMEDD.ARMY.MIL.



Watch out! Broken sidewalks, along Stanley Road, can create tripping hazards for walkers and runners. Use caution!

OSHA Update

“OSHA’s mission is to send every American worker home whole and healthy every day.” To meet the mission challenge, they are focusing on three goals:

- Improving workplace safety and health by reducing injuries, illnesses, and fatalities.
- Changing workplace culture by increasing employer and employee commitment to improving safety and health.
- Securing public confidence through excellence in developing and delivering OSHA services.

These goals sound familiar to the Installation Safety Office and in-fact could be rewritten with the term ISO substituted for OSHA. However, the mission should be that of every employee. We cannot achieve success without everyone working together by doing all jobs safely, by performing Job Hazard Analyses, and by using appropriate control measures that includes both engineering controls and personal protective equipment.

Enforcement Activity

It appears that OSHA is continuing their intensified efforts at military installations throughout the U.S. They are not only looking at the government activities but the contractors as well. Recently, Ms. Sherri W. Goodman, Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Environmental Security (where the DoD Occupational Safety and Health Program resides) has written OSHA concerning DoD’s responsibility for contractors on military installations. The initial feedback indicates that DoD will be treated the same as the private sector – oversight, shared responsibility, shared liability, etc. The following are two recent inspections at military installations and provides an indication of what is being found.

San Diego Naval Station

Worker died when overcome by hydrogen sulfide while removing the cover from a sewage tank. He passed

out, fell head-first into the tank. The second worker was overcome by the deadly gas but survived.

Finding: Lack of a Confined Space Program, lack of evaluating the breathing hazards, lack of signs in Spanish and English, lack of sharing information with subcontractors, and lack of personal protective equipment.

Hunter Army Air Field

Scaffolding: Lack of support, lack of means to access and egress, lack of guarding, and lack of a competent person.

Fall Protection: Lack of proper tie-offs and other fall protection deficiencies.

Ergonomics

Congress has made a bold statement concerning funding for implementation of the Ergonomics OSHA standard. They will withhold funding. Why would educated persons take this stand when it is obvious that many individuals suffer from Muscular Skeleton Disorders (MSD) and the costs for treatment is extremely high? The proposed standard is misunderstood. MSD solutions are not like machine guarding or something else that is exact. Ergonomic issues are not always definitive and the solutions are often evasive. The programmatic approaches vary with the industry and/or work activity; therefore, a cookbook methodology does not work. It appears that this “soft science” is what concerns congressmen. They heard testimony from businesses that didn’t understand ergonomics and have heard tales of expensive requirements. The OSHA requirements for ergonomics were discussed previously and basically tell the employer that they must establish a program that involves employees. There is not a full scale requirement to replace equipment. There is not a full scale requirement to redesign work places.

When the Ergonomics Program was

first started at Fort Sam Houston, supervisors were afraid that it meant spending hundreds of thousands of dollars on needless pieces of equipment. The approach taken by Fort Sam Houston is outlined in AMEDDC&S & FSH Memo 385-10.

When we talk about ordering new chairs, we can do so with the intent of ordering something that is adjustable. The costs are comparable to regular chairs. Those individuals that have had MSDs because of their workstation designs and their chairs know how simple changes have made a difference. You may access Ergonomics computer based training at www.cs.amedd.army.mil/iso_cbt.

Most Cited Violations

Based on a review of the violations during 1999, the following is a consolidation of general industry and the construction industry with respect to the most frequently cited violations.

Personal Protective Equipment (Lack of Hazard Assessment, Proper Selection, and Use)

Hazard Communication (Lack of Program, Chemical Inventory, MSDS availability, and information to the employees)

Means of Egress (Lack of proper signage, blocking passage ways, and locking doors)

Lockout/Tagout (Lack of a Written Program and lack of implementation)

Machine Guarding (Lack of proper guarding)

Guarding of Floor and Wall Openings (Lack of Guard Rails or other means)

Fall Protection (Lack of PPE, Written Programs, Tie-offs)

Powered Industrial Trucks (MHE – Lack of Programs, Driver Testing, Driver Evaluations, and Inspections)

Excavations and Trenching (Lack of Shoring, Competent Persons, and Worker Training)

Electrical (Performing Hot-Work unnecessarily)

Do any of these apply to FSH?



**Please Distribute this News Letter
Throughout your organization !**

FSH Happy Halloween Safety Rules



- Designated time for trick-or-treating on FSH is 6 to 8 pm on 31 Oct.
- Young children should always go trick-or-treating with an adult.
- Never trick-or-treat alone.
- Plan your trick-or-treat route and let your family know what it is.
- Wait until you get home and your parents check your trick-or-treat candy before you eat it.
- When trick-or-treating be very cautious of animals and strangers.
- Accept Halloween treats only in the doorway. Never go inside a house.
- Be sure and say thank you for your Halloween treats.
- Don't play near lit jack-o-lanterns.
- When trick-or-treating visit only houses where the lights are on.
- Walk, do not run when trick-or-treating.
- Walk on sidewalks and driveways when trick-or-treating.
- Cross the street at the corner or in a crosswalk.
- When trick-or-treating do not hide or cross the street between cars.
- When trick-or-treating take a cellular phone with you if possible.
- Wear a watch when trick-or-treating.
- When trick-or-treating carry a flashlight.
- Use face paint, rather than a mask or things that will cover your eyes.



Carbon Monoxide—Serious Danger Lurking in Homes

Carbon monoxide (CO) is a colorless, odorless, tasteless and toxic gas produced as a by-product of combustion. Any fuel burning appliance, vehicle, tool or other device has the potential to produce dangerous levels of carbon monoxide gas. Examples of carbon monoxide producing devices commonly in use around the home include:

- Fuel fired furnaces (non-electric)
- Gas water heaters
- Fireplaces and woodstoves
- Gas stoves
- Gas dryers
- Charcoal grills
- Lawnmowers, power washers, and other yard equipment
- Automobiles

The Consumer Products Safety Commission (CPSC) reports that approximately 200 people per year are killed by accidental CO poisoning with an additional 5000 people injured. These deaths and injuries are typically caused by improperly used or malfunctioning equipment aggravated by improve-

ments in building construction which limit the amount of fresh air flowing in to homes and other structures.

While regular maintenance and inspection of gas burning equipment in the home can minimize the potential for exposure to CO gas, the possibility for some type of sudden failure resulting in a potentially life threatening build up of gas always exists.

October brought with it the first cold weather of the season in San Antonio and with the need to light up our furnaces. ***A family of four recently suffered from CO poisoning when they turned on their furnace for the first time this season.***

According to City Public Service (CPS), they received 20 reports of sickness due to CO last year. EMS records show that for 1998, 27 people were treated for CO poisoning. Education and emphasis on preventive medicine are the key to preventing CO poisonings in homes.

Symptoms are very similar to the flu: dizziness, blurred vision, headaches, nausea, diarrhea, confusion, and unconsciousness. Prolonged exposure can be fatal. If symptoms improve after moving to fresh air, CO poisoning should be suspected, source identified and eliminated. Seek medical attention as needed.

Use of CO alarms has proven beneficial. However, there are a few precautions. Place the alarm near sleeping areas, don't let the batteries go dead, if the alarm keeps going off—don't assume it is faulty...remember you cannot see or smell CO. Replace sensors every 2-3 years. If wired, don't let the location of the wiring dictate the location of the detector.

Furnaces should be cleaned and checked every year. Furnace flames should burn blue. A red or yellow flame indicates presence of CO. Keep furnace doors properly closed. For Safety Tips, call CPS at 353-2970.